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TAGS: [OSCE](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KCFE](#) [RO](#)
SUBJECT: ROMANIA ON OPEN SKIES TREATY GUIDANCE AND CFE
CROSS-GROUP STATIONING, OTHER ISSUES

REF: A. STATE 158840
[1](#)B. STATE 110161
[1](#)C. STATE 68577

Classified By: Political Counsellor Ted Tanoue, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) In an October 24 meeting with Polmiloff, MFA Director for Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Counter-Terrorism Dan Neculeascu said Romania agreed with the US position on the issue of Russia's hazardous airspace zone Open Skies restrictions for a minimum 3,600 meter flight ceiling (ref A). He underscored the importance that Russia was willing to show some flexibility in addressing the issue. However, Romania believes not only that the Russian ceiling limits Treaty partners from fully exercising their Open Skies rights, but also that the imposed ceiling is in fact "a breach."

[1](#)2. (C) Neculeascu said though Romania wants the CFE parties to continue to press Russia on this issue, Romania would not take the lead in discussions with the Russians. Instead, Romania would gladly support other countries that do take the lead. Romania has too many other sensitive issues (Black Sea or flank-related) to risk further increasing tensions with Moscow, although it is still ready to play a supporting role. Meanwhile, Neculeascu appreciated the US invitation to accompany its Russia Open Skies "test flight" with the Canadians, but regretted that MFA officials were not available at that time. The relevant office in the MOD had also responded that it did not have sufficient advance notice to spare anyone. Neculeascu said he hoped the US would continue to be generous on such opportunities. He noted that Romania was in the process of certifying an Open Skies plane soon.

[1](#)3. (C) Neculeascu also raised concerns about Russia's strategy to bind the Alliance on defining "substantial combat forces" and cross-group stationing issues. He expressed appreciation for the U.S. "food for thought" paper and proposed strategy for dealing with Russian claims regarding the CFE Treaty (refs b and c). He said NATO allies should be careful not to appear defensive, but should look for opportunities for coordinated and direct response to the Russians. Neculeascu said a response to the Russians should not be managed out of Vienna, since he believes that would tend to dilute the impact.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: Contacts at MFA, in particular, have been increasingly expressing concern that Russia is becoming more assertive in the region on a range of issues, as exemplified by Moscow recently raising intellectual property rights issues related to Kalishnikov rifle licensing agreements with Romania (and Czech Republic, Poland and Bulgaria). Though Bucharest is close to signing a licensing agreement with Moscow, the MFA is still puzzling why the Russians waited so long and what has prompted the sudden urgency. One

explanation may be Moscow's concern with the recent provision of SA/LW to Georgia. In the run-up to the Riga summit, Romania wants to make sure the message about Alliance unity is loud, frequent, and clear. End Comment.
Taubman